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LETTER DATED 29 OCTOBER 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the informal consultations held on Friday, 25 October 1996, at which the members of the Security Council discussed the deteriorating situation in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

In accordance with the views expressed by the members of the Council on that occasion, I am taking steps to appoint as soon as possible a Special Representative for the Great Lakes region who would be provided with adequate staff and logistic resources to carry out a variety of functions in the region. I intend to present my proposals to the Security Council in a written report, together with preliminary cost estimates, as soon as the necessary data have been compiled.

Meanwhile, I have decided to appoint a Special Envoy who will travel to the Great Lakes region in the first days of November and remain there for a period of about one month. The Special Envoy's tasks will be threefold. First, he will consult with all concerned in order to establish the facts relating to the present conflicts and will develop urgent plans for defusing the tension and establishing a ceasefire and a process of negotiations. Secondly, he will explore the possibilities for the early convening of a regional conference. Thirdly, he will present me with advice on the mandate to be given to my Special Representative and on the size and structure of the United Nations political presence which, in consultation with the Governments concerned, will be established in the Great Lakes region.

I am happy to be able to inform the Security Council that the Government of Canada has offered to make available the services of the Canadian Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Raymond Chrétien, to serve as my Special Envoy. At my request, the Government of Canada has also agreed to provide an aircraft to facilitate Mr. Chrétien's travel in the region. The United Nations will provide the staff and other resources required for him to perform his functions.

I should be grateful if you would bring this information to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

96-29727 (E) 301096